#### Trend Study 10-14-00

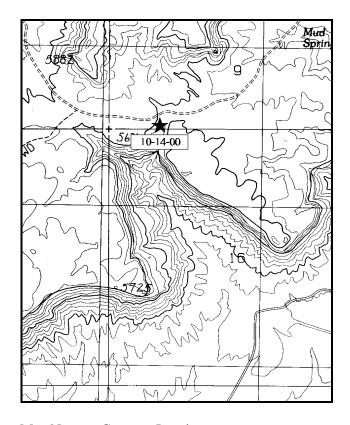
Study site name: <u>East Floy Bench</u>. Range type: <u>Big Sagebrush</u>.

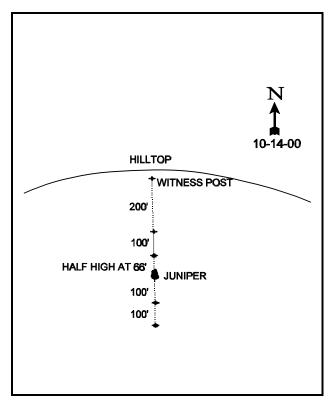
Compass bearing: frequency baseline 165°M.

First frame placement on frequency belts <u>5</u> feet. Frequency belt placement; line 1 (11 & 95ft), line 2 (34ft), line 3 (59ft), line 4 (71ft). Belt 3 rebar at 15ft.

## **LOCATION DESCRIPTION**

Go to Crescent Junction, off of I-70 east of Green River. From the dirt road 0.1 miles east of the gas station and SR 163 junction, cross the east-west running tracks and go north two miles on the main dirt road to a fork. Bear right and go 3.7 miles to a fork on top of a hill, stay left and climb out of the wash and up the west side of the canyon. Turn left. Continue 0.45 miles to the crest of a small hill. There is a rebar witness post 10 feet to the left. The 0-foot baseline stake, marked with a browse tag, is 200 feet south of the witness post.





Map Name: <u>Crescent Junction</u>

Township 21S, Range 19E, Section 9/16

Diagrammatic Sketch

UTM. 4317389.368 N, 602929.589 E

#### **DISCUSSION**

#### Trend Study No. 10-14 (16B-1)

The East Floy Bench transect is located on a low lying bench running along the south end of the Book Cliffs. The bench has a north aspect with a 3-5% slope and an elevation of 5,600 feet. This sagebrush-pinyon-juniper flat drops off abruptly at the southern edge to the salt desert below. This study is located on BLM administered land in the Floy Creek Allotment. In 1986, it was grazed by 1,208 sheep from mid-November to mid-April. This allotment was converted to cattle use after 1995. Grazing is currently permitted from November 1st through April 20 for cows at 958 AUM's on a 4 pasture deferred rotation system. Pellet group quadrat frequencies in 1995 and 2000 indicate light to moderate deer use, occasionally light use by elk, and high rabbit use. Pellet group transect data from 2000 estimated 27 deer days use/acre (67 ddu/ha), 7 elk days use/acre (17 edu/ha), and 18 cow days use/acre (44 cdu/ha).

The sandy loam soil is moderately deep, although, there are large areas of exposed and shallow covered sandstone bedrock. Chemical analysis indicates the soil is low in phosphorus at 4.3 ppm where 10 ppm has been shown to be necessary for normal plant growth and development. The soil is neutral in reactivity (pH of 7.0) and organic matter is low at less than 1%. A profile stoniness index estimated from penetrometer readings show the majority of the rockiness to occur between 8 and 12 inches in depth. Effective rooting depth is nearly 13 inches with average soil temperature being 62°F at 11 inches in depth. Bare ground is abundant on this site. In 1995, bare ground cover was estimated at 39%, increasing to over 57% in 2000. Average cover from vegetation and litter both decreased in 2000. Some soil movement is evident in plant interspaces, but due to the gentle slope, erosion is light. Rock and pavement cover combine for less than 2% of the ground cover.

Wyoming big sagebrush is the key browse species with an estimated density of 2,700 plants/acre in 1986, declining to 1,060 plants/acre in 1995, and 940 plant/acre in 2000. The decrease in density after 1986 is due mainly to the increased sample size used beginning in mid-1992, evidenced by the lack of dead plants in 1995. Mature plants comprise the majority of the population in both 1995 and 2000. Recruitment from young plants was moderately high in 1995 at 23%, but decreased to only 4% in 2000. Percent decadency has varied between sampling years. Decadency was estimated at 19% in 1986, down to 2% in 1995, and 28% in 2000. The proportion of the population displaying poor vigor has slightly increased in successive years where it is currently estimated at 19%. Utilization was moderate to heavy in the 1986 sample, but has since decreased to a more moderate level. Heavy use decreased to 4% in 1995 and then up to 11% in 2000. A sample of sagebrush annual leader growth were measured in 2000 which showed an average of about 7 inches. The population appeared to be naturally thinning itself in response to extended drought with one out of every five plants sampled classified as dead in 1995. The ratio of live to dead plants has since improved. Increased decadency, decreased recruitment, and reduced vigor since 1995 is likely partially due to the extended drought. Due to the larger sample size and better sample distribution used in 1995, considerably more browse species were sampled in 1995 and 2000. These species include: fourwing saltbush, winterfat, spiny hopsage, green ephedra, shadscale, rubber rabbitbrush, low rabbitbrush, slenderbush eriogonum, broom snakeweed, and cactus.

were sampled in 1995 and 2000. These species include: fourwing saltbush, winterfat, spiny hopsage, green ephedra, shadscale, rubber rabbitbrush, low rabbitbrush, slenderbush eriogonum, broom snakeweed, and cactus Many of these species are preferred by wildlife and livestock, but most occur in low densities. These shrubs show light to moderate utilization in 1995 and 2000. In 1995, most of these species had good vigor, with poor vigor increasing on fourwing and spiny hopsage in 2000. Broom snakeweed was the most abundant shrub in 1986 and 1995, but has since decreased to only 960 plants/acre in 2000. This species is vulnerable to drought conditions and is most likely decreasing due to the extended drought. Point center-quarter data estimates a low number of juniper trees in both 1995 and 2000 (16 trees/acre).

From 1986 to 1995, there was a significant decline in sum of nested frequency for perennial grasses. Galleta, bottlebrush squirreltail, and needle-and-thread all declined in 1995. In 2000, sum of nested frequency for perennial grasses slightly increased. Galleta and needle-and-thread remain stable, while bottlebrush squirreltail

significantly increased in nested frequency. Cheatgrass and sixweeks fescue, both annuals, significantly decreased in nested frequency in 2000. Forbs have been sparse in all sampling years, but especially so in 2000, where only two annual species were sampled.

#### 1986 APPARENT TREND ASSESSMENT

Data and observations indicate an apparent slight downward trend under the current winter sheep grazing regime. The palatable shrubs are moderately to heavily hedged and generally declining in vigor and reproductive success. The Wyoming big sagebrush population has an encouraging amount of young plants, however, broom snakeweed and juniper appear to be increasing. Of particular concern is the fact that unless the new grazing plan includes a reduction in sheep AUM's, excessive shrub utilization will result in pastures that are not rested. This sagebrush range gradually gives way to the more traditional salt desert shrub sheep winter range at lower elevations. Management strategies should strive to minimize sheep use on critical big game winter range and limit winter use to the lower elevational areas. The soil is stable, but would benefit from less disturbance.

#### 1995 TREND ASSESSMENT

Although this area had early spring precipitation, the rest of the summer was drier than usual. The early spring precipitation likely did not benefit the perennial grasses due to the abundance of cheatgrass. Perennial grass species compete poorly for soil moisture with cheatgrass when moisture only comes in the winter and spring, especially when cheatgrass is abundant. Although grasses provide 50% of the total vegetative cover on the site, the sum of nested frequency for perennial grass has declined by nearly 50% since 1986. For this reason, the herbaceous understory trend is downward with a notably poor forb component. The browse trend for this site appears to be stable. The Wyoming big sagebrush population has good biotic potential with nearly one-fourth of the population classified as young plants. Also, the intensity of hedging has shifted from heavy to moderate with a declining percent decadency. Some soil movement is evident, but due to the gentle slope, vegetative cover, and cryptogamic crust cover, the movement is slight. Therefore, soil trend is considered stable.

#### TREND ASSESSMENT

soil - stable (3)

browse - stable (3)

herbaceous understory - downward and dominated by poor value annual forbs and annual grasses (1)

## 2000 TREND ASSESSMENT

Trend for soil is slightly down with a large increase in bare ground cover and decreases in cover from herbaceous vegetation and litter. The ratio of protective ground cover to bare soil is low at 2:1. Trend for browse is slightly down. Wyoming big sagebrush has increased decadency and poor vigor, as well as decreased recruitment from 23% in 1995 to 4% in 2000. Other less abundant palatable species such as fourwing saltbush, spiny hopsage, and shadscale have high decadency rates. Trend for the herbaceous understory is stable with a slight increase in sum of nested frequency for perennial grasses.

#### TREND ASSESSMENT

soil - slightly down (2)

browse - slightly down (2)

herbaceous understory - stable (3)

HERBACEOUS TRENDS --Herd unit 10 . Study no: 14

пе	rd unit 10 , Study no: 14							Average		
T	Species	Nested	Freque	ncy	Quadra	ıt Frequ	ency	Average Cover 9		
y p								COVEL 7	O	
e		'86	'95	'00'	'86	'95	'00	'95	'00	
G	Aristida purpurea	a <sup>-</sup>	ab 1	ь7	-	1	4	.03	.07	
G	Bromus tectorum (a)	-	<sub>b</sub> 318	<sub>a</sub> 56	-	97	25	6.72	1.10	
G	Elymus salina	a <sup>-</sup>	<sub>b</sub> 15	<sub>b</sub> 13	-	5	6	1.10	.18	
G	Hilaria jamesii	<sub>b</sub> 156	<sub>a</sub> 65	<sub>a</sub> 76	66	27	30	1.10	2.01	
G	Oryzopsis hymenoides	<sub>b</sub> 36	<sub>b</sub> 37	<sub>a</sub> 17	21	19	8	1.91	.30	
G	Sitanion hystrix	<sub>b</sub> 40	<sub>a</sub> 7	<sub>a</sub> 2	17	4	1	.07	.03	
G	Sporobolus cryptandrus	a <sup>-</sup>	<sub>a</sub> 5	<sub>b</sub> 63	-	2	27	.03	1.58	
G	Stipa comata	<sub>b</sub> 92	<sub>a</sub> 40	<sub>a</sub> 39	42	19	15	.92	.93	
G	Vulpia octoflora (a)	-	<sub>b</sub> 75	<sub>a</sub> 4	-	27	2	.21	.01	
Т	otal for Annual Grasses	0	393	60	0	124	27	6.93	1.11	
To	otal for Perennial Grasses	324	170	217	146	77	91	5.18	5.12	
Т	otal for Grasses	324	563	277	146	201	118	12.11	6.23	
F	Chenopodium leptophyllum (a)	-	2	-	-	1	-	.00	-	
F	Descurainia pinnata (a)	-	3	-	-	1	-	.00	-	
F	Draba spp. (a)	-	ь17	a <sup>-</sup>	-	5	-	.02	-	
F	Eriogonum cernuum (a)	-	ь10	a <sup>-</sup>	-	4	-	.02	-	
F	Erigeron pumilus	-	5	-	-	3	-	.01	-	
F	Lappula occidentalis (a)	-	<sub>b</sub> 67	a <sup>-</sup>	-	24	1	.12	-	
F	Plantago patagonica (a)	-	<sub>b</sub> 42	a-	-	17	-	.09	-	
F	Ranunculus testiculatus (a)	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	.00	
F	Salsola iberica (a)	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	.00	
F	Tragopogon dubius	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	
Т	otal for Annual Forbs	0	141	3	0	52	2	0.26	0.00	
Т	otal for Perennial Forbs	3	5	0	1	3	0	0.01	0	
To	otal for Forbs	3	146	3	1	55	2	0.28	0.00	

Values with different subscript letters are significantly different at % = 0.10 (annuals excluded)

## BROWSE TRENDS --

Herd unit 10, Study no: 14

$\overline{}$	Study no: 14				
T	Species	Strip		Average	
У		Freque	ncy	Cover 9	6
p					
e		'95	'00	'95	'00
В	Artemisia tridentata	24	21	4.20	3.29
	wyomingensis				
В	, ,	7	7	.56	.15
D	Atriplex canescens	/	/	.30	.13
В	Atriplex confertifolia	4	5	.03	.88
В	Ceratoides lanata	6	2	.45	.15
В	Chrysothamnus nauseosus	1	0	-	1
	consimilis				
В	Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus	9	7	.15	.44
	stenophyllus				
В	Ephedra viridis	1	4	_	1.50
Ъ	•	2	0	00	
В	Eriogonum microthecum	2	U	.00	-
В	Grayia spinosa	5	2	.33	.15
В	Gutierrezia sarothrae	80	27	3.82	.32
В	Juniperus osteosperma	0	0	2.25	3.11
В	Opuntia spp.	1	4	-	.03
Т	otal for Browse	140	79	11.82	10.05

# CANOPY COVER ---

Herd unit 10, Study no: 14

Species	Percent Cover
	'00
Juniperus osteosperma	4

## BASIC COVER --

Herd unit 10, Study no: 14

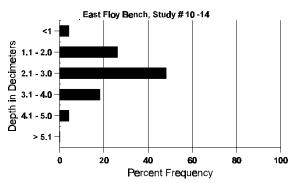
Cover Type	Nested Frequen	cy	Average	Cover %	
	'95	'00	'86	'95	'00
Vegetation	337	224	2.25	23.38	17.85
Rock	42	12	0	1.45	1.17
Pavement	66	44	0	.44	.42
Litter	387	351	35.75	31.51	24.85
Cryptogams	235	220	2.50	10.39	10.03
Bare Ground	335	364	59.50	39.23	57.54

## SOIL ANALYSIS DATA --

Herd Unit 10, Study # 14, Study Name: East Floy Bench

Effective rooting depth (inches)	Temp °F (depth)	pН	%sand	%silt	%clay	%0M	РРМ Р	РРМ К	dS/m
12.76	62.0 (11.02)	7.0	60.0	23.4	16.6	0.6	4.3	185.6	0.5

# Stoniness Index



## PELLET GROUP FREQUENCY --

Herd unit 10, Study no: 14

Туре	Quadra Freque	
	'95	'00
Sheep	7	4
Horse	1	-
Rabbit	58	42
Bighorn	ī	-
Elk	5	3
Deer	20	15
Cattle	-	2

Pellet T	ransect
Pellet Groups per Acre (00	Days Use per Acre (ha) (00
-	1
35	N/A
435	N/A
44	N/A
87	7 (17)
348	27 (67)
218	18 (44)

## BROWSE CHARACTERISTICS --

Herd unit 10, Study no: 14

A Y G R		Form C	lass (1	No. of	Plants	s)					Vigor Cl	lass			Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)	Total
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Tota	al P	'95 '00 Plants/Ac	cre (ex	589 689	6 6	ad & S	049 119	6 6	-			- -	'95	5	2700 1060		199° 29° 289°
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A G	Y R	Form Cl	ass (N	lo. of	Plants	)					Vigor Cl	ass			Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)	Total
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%	Plar	nts Show			derate	Use		ivy Us	<u>se</u>		oor Vigor				<u>.</u>	%Change	
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To	otal I	Plants/Ac	ere (ex	cludin	ig Dea	ad & S	eedlir	ngs)					'86		0	Dec:	-
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													'00		180		-

A G	Y R	Form	Class	s (No	o. of I	Plants	)					Vigor C	lass			Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)	Total
Е		1	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4		Ht. Cr.	
Cl	nrys	othamn	us na	ause	osus o	consir	nilis											
M	86	_		_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	0		0
	95	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0
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Τα	otal l	Plants/	Acre	(exc	cludin	g Dea	ad & S	eedlir	198)					'86		0	Dec:	0%
1	, tui	i idiitis/ i	1010	(OAC	Judin	S Dec	ia cc b	ccam	53)					'95		20	DCC.	100%
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S	86	_		_	_	_		_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	0		0
	95	-		_	-	_	_	-	_	_	_	-	_	_	_	0		0
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	00	1		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	=	-	20		1
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	95	3		-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	100	16 34	5
	00	7		-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	160	13 28	8
D	86	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0
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A	Y	Form Cl	ass (N	No. of 1	Plants	)					Vigor C	lass			Plants	Average	Total
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Εŗ	hed	ra viridis															
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	95 00	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	20 80		1
Н		2	2	-	-	-	-		-	-	4	_	-	-			4
M	86 95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	63 97	0
	00	-	3	2	_	_	_	_	_	-	5	_	_	-	100	25 25	5
D	86	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	0		0
	95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0
	00	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	20		1
X	86	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	0		0
	95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0
Ш	00	-		-			-	-	-			-	-	_	20		1
%	Plai	nts Show '86'	ing	<u>Mo</u>	<u>derate</u>	Use	<u>Hea</u>	avy Us	<u>se</u>		oor Vigor )%	<u>-</u>			-	%Change	
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	95	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	20		1
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M	86	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0
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%	Piai	nts Show '86		00%	derate	<u>Use</u>	009	avy Us	<u>se</u>		oor Vigor )%				<u>-</u>	%Change	
		'95		00%			00%				)%						
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10	otai I	Plants/Ac	re (ex	keludin	ig Dea	ia & S	eeam	igs)					'86 '95		0 140	Dec:	-
													'00		0		-

A G		Form Cl	ass (N	lo. of	Plants	3)					Vigor C	lass			Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)		Total
E	IX	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	Tel Acie	Ht. Cr.		
G	rayia	spinosa								'								
M	86 95	2	-	=	- 1	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	0 60	- 25	- 44	0 3
	00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		44	0
D	86 95	- 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	0 60			0
	00	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	40			2
%	Plai	nts Show	ing		derate	Use		avy Us	s <u>e</u>		or Vigor				(	%Change		
		'86 '95		009			009 009			00						-67%		
		'00		100			00%				0%					-07/0		
Т	otal l	Plants/Ac	ere (ex	cludir	ng Dea	ad & S	Seedlir	ngs)					'86		0	Dec:		0%
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G	utier	rezia sar	othrae	;									- 00					10070
S	86	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	333			10
	95 00	1 -	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	40 0			2 0
Y	86	112								_	112				3733			112
	95	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	100			5
	00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0			0
M	86 95	129 295	-	-	- 7	-	-	-	-	-	129 302	-	-	-	4300 6040	8	7 11	129 302
	93	293	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	660	9 6	8	33
D	86	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	166			5
	95 00	- 14	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	- 7	-	1	- 7	300			0 15
X	86	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0			0
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0%		nts Show	ing	- Mo	derate	- Hse	Нея	evy Us	- :A	- Po	or Vigor	<u>-</u>	-	_	I.	%Change		13
/0	1 Iai	'86	mg	009		OSC	009	6	<u>sc</u>	00		-				-25%		
		'95 '00		009 029			009 009			00 17					-	-84%		
										1 /	/0							
To	otal l	Plants/Ac	ere (ex	cludir	ng Dea	ad & S	Seedlir	ngs)					'86 '95		8199 6140	Dec:		2% 0%
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A Y G R	Fo	Form Class (No. of Plants)									Vigor Class				Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)	Total
E		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4		Ht. Cr.	
Junip	erus	osteo	sperm	ıa													
Y 86		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	33		1
95 00		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0
	_	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	_	0	51 51	0
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00		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0
% Plants Showing				Moderate Use			Heavy Use			Poor	Vigor				(	%Change	
		'86	Ü	00%	ó		00%	ó	_	00%					-		
		'95		00%			00%			00%							
		'00		00%	ó		00%	ó		00%							
		nts/Ac	re (ex	cludin	g Dea	ad & S	eedlin	ıgs)					'86 '95 '00		66 0 0	Dec:	- - -
Opun	ntia s	nts/Ac	re (ex	cludin	g Dea	ad & S	eedlin	ıgs)					'95		0		- - -
Opun M 86	ntia s	spp.	re (ex	cludin	g Dea	nd & S	eedlin	ngs)	-	-	1		'95		33	7 1	- - - 1
Opun	ntia s	nts/Ac	re (ex	cludin - - -	g Dea	- - -	eedlin	ngs) - - -	- - - -	-	1 1 3	- - -	'95		0		1 1 3
Opun M 86 95	ntia s	spp.	- - -	cludin	g Dea	- - -	eedlin	- - - -	- - -		1	- - -	'95 '00 - -		33 20	7 1 5 21	1
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